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beauty of Vao. Here, facing the channel, on the island's south-western shore, is the lovely beach called Kowu,[1] forming a long shallow bay, bounded on its north-western extremity by a wide reef. If we have the good fortune to arrive not too early in the morning, before the exodus to the mainland has begun, we may see no fewer than eighty canoes ranged side by side, following the curve of the beach, high up on the sand, out of reach of the tide. Slowly the natives come down, the men with their guns bought from white traders, without which they never move off the island, the women with baskets, their babies on their backs, the children playing and occasionally helping.

After much talk and laughter, each family group will separately carry or drag its canoe down to the sea, and soon a fleet of perhaps fifty canoes will be crossing the channel, each heading for its own landing-place on the mainland opposite. If the wind is favourable, sails made of pandanus strips dyed red, plaited by the women and sewn together by the men, are hoisted, each shaped like an inverted triangle.[2] If there is no wind, or if it is in the wrong quarter, paddles alone must do the work, and the gay cries of the paddlers echo over the sea.

WALK THROUGH THE VILLAGE DANCING-GROUNDS

Men's paths and women's paths. The sacred way.

If, having watched this pleasing scene, we now turn towards the interior of the island, we find the choice of two paths. Perhaps a few stray natives are still coming down to the shore. Of these we notice that the men with confident air take one, while the women, more modest with their load of baskets, take the other. At the spot where the men come out on to the shore there is a wall of stones[3] lining the path, which has been consecrated by the sacrifice of a large number of tusked boars. This marks the shoreward end of the great sacred way that leads from one end of the island to the other. The stone wall itself and the boars sacrificed on it indicate among other things that this section of the way is taboo to women and to male children who have not yet taken the first step in their formal religious life by themselves sacrificing their first boars.

This way leads upwards towards the centre of the island. About thirty yards from its abutment on the shore it is joined by the women's path, and from here onward it may be used by women as well as men, since no further sanctified monuments lie on this part of the way. On approaching the first village dancing-ground, it divides once more, the

[1] Godefroy (1, 1933, p. 30), following his predecessor, Père Jamond, supposes this word to be derived from the English word "cove," and tells a circumstantial story to prove it. This is a false derivation. It is a native name and occurs in song-language as *ke-u*.

[2] See p. 460.

[3] I did not record the name for this wall on Vao. In Atchin it is *na-wor*.

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main way broadening out to become the dancing-ground itself, of which the sanctity is proclaimed by the dolmens and monoliths that line its sides, the women's path going parallel to it behind what is termed the "Lower" Side. Once past the dancing-ground, the women's path again joins the great way, which then proceeds to the next village dancing-ground, where it once more divides. In this way the men's path traverses all the main dancing-grounds on the island, each of which has in addition its own way down to its own beach, divided at the shoreward end into a men's path sanctified by the presence of a stone wall on which sacrifices have been performed, and a women's path marked only by the track which they have themselves made.

Dancing-ground of Pete-hul.

If we now follow the way inshore from Kowu we find ourselves in a minute valley, the ground gently rising on either side. After a minute or two fences appear, indicating the proximity of houses. A little further on the path widens, on the left a great banyan tree raises its mighty branches from which innumerable aerial roots redescend into the ground, and we find ourselves in the midst of an arena which is the dancing-ground of the chief village of Pete-hul. This arena is scooped out of the head of the shallow valley we have been following, which here widens, and then closes again. The tiny declivity would be almost unnoticeable were it not for the hand of man that had converted it into a place of unforgettable memory.

The whole surface of the ground with its mixture of volcanic dust is scrupulously weeded, and provides an incomparably soft yet firm and resilient medium for processional and other dances. Both sides of the dancing-ground are lined with the stone monuments set up during successive Maki rites, but these sides differ in that the monuments on the left, or what in native terminology is called the "Upper" Side, are incomparably the more magnificent. Opposed to these are the comparatively insignificant stones lining the "Lower" Side behind which runs the path taken by the women, who, as stated, may not set foot on the dancing-ground proper except on stated occasions. In the lay-out of any such ground, if the land rises on either side this will invariably be chosen as the "Upper" Side, thus demonstrating the correlation between physical and spiritual height, which is a marked feature of all New Hebridean ritual. The terms "upper" and "lower" are primarily of a social and spiritual nature, and it is on the Upper Side that the chief sacrifices are made by men of high rank, those on the Lower Side being carried out only by young men and boys who have not yet, through sacrifice of the nobler grades of tusked boar, completely established their independence from the uninitiated women whose path lies immediately behind it. For men dominate society, and only those men who have performed the highest sacrifice have full access to the spirit world of the

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within which is also the family cemetery in which old men of high rank are buried. No women born outside the village (which, owing to clan exogamy, includes all wives and mothers of clan members) are allowed inside this enclosure, and those born within it (that is to say, the lodge-members' sisters and daughters) are only allowed in when specially invited on some errand by one of the senior members, or on certain ritual occasions.

This organisation into lodges will be fully described in the chapter on Social Organisation. Enough has been said now to enable us to enter the village without trespassing where we are not wanted and to understand something of what is going on.

Dress.

As we go up from the beach we shall have the opportunity first of observing native dress. As may be seen in the photograph of Kowu beach (Plate I), young boys and young girls go completely naked. When they are about six or eight years old, the boys start wearing a plaited string belt of soft material around their waists. This belt will have at first only a single coil, but as they grow older the number of coils increases till the string belt assumes quite lengthy proportions and may be wound as many as six or seven times around the waist. At about the age of puberty the boys put on a new garment. This is a penis-wrapper made out of a banana leaf stripped longitudinally in half with the midrib removed but leaving enough of the central fibre to withstand a certain amount of wear. This leaf is wound round and round the penis spirally, in such a way that the windings continue beyond the glans. This continuation of the wrapper is then drawn up over the string belt and finally tucked in behind it from above. The penis is thus held vertically upwards parallel to the central line of the abdomen, with the testicles completely exposed to view. This is the ordinary dress of youths not yet initiated. On initiation, the banana-leaf wrapper, called *nu-mba-nu-mbe*, is retained as an under-garment, but is now covered by a ceremonial penis-wrapper (*na-avu*) consisting of a flat strip of material plaited by women from thin strips of pandanus-palm leaf, dyed red and ornamented with designs in the dull yellow colour left by immersion in the juice of turmeric leaves. Both ends of the wrapper are so constructed as to leave a fringe of the same material, slit very fine so as to form tassels. This wrapper is wound round the penis in the same way as the underlying banana-leaf wrapper, and the tassels similarly tucked over and behind the plaited string belt. Over the string belt and tassels is now wound a broad bark-board belt called *na-tuve*, about six inches wide, made of the inner bark of a special tree sometimes covered with coconut fibre, wound round in super-imposed coils, which cover the abdomen from above the navel to the groin. This is in turn held in place by a plaited belt called *ne-tuw*, also made by women and in

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dust. Dry leaves kept at hand are then swiftly placed over the spark, and fanned by blowing into a flame. Under favourable and absolutely dry conditions fire can be made by this method in under a minute. But it is hard work, and the European trying for the first time may work for five minutes before getting a flame.

Ritual fires and sex dichotomy. Position of strangers.

There is no family gathering for the meal, however, for one of the fundamental principles underlying society in these islands is that those who have performed the Maki rite, that is to say practically the whole male population, have thereby become so holy that they may not eat with women. This sex dichotomy which decrees that all the men, apart from small boys who have not yet taken their first step in the Maki, must eat separately from women, is one of the most marked features of Small Island society, and has far-reaching results. It is largely bound up with the question of fires, which in themselves, when lit by a member of the Maki hierarchy, are holy. Thus one of the chief acts at the moment of consecration during this rite is the lighting of a new fire, with brands from which (according to one account) the oven on which his meals are henceforth to be cooked must be kindled. Tales dealing with the miraculous origin of certain fires as related on Atchin will be given in a later volume.

One of the results of this sanctity of fires, which affected the writer's entire outlook and conditioned much of his work, was the fact that he himself, not having taken Maki rank, was unsanctified. He was therefore unable to eat with the men, nor could he eat with women, since had he done this he would have been classed as one and therefore automatically debarred from knowledge of men's secret rites. So he was forced to eat alone. This resulted in practically no contact with women, and in the fact that, lacking the ordinary meal-time companionship which in other countries, and indeed among themselves within the sex ban, is the time of greatest sociability, his attention was largely concentrated on the more formal, ritual life of the natives, of which this fire ban is one of the most salient characteristics.

It is therefore not as an honoured guest that the stranger from outside the closed ranks of the Maki hierarchy will be received at meal-time, but as a stranger from a different world, tolerated on account of his personality and his adherence to a race that may indeed be superior in many other ways, but yet one outside the pale of communal eating, to whom it is no insult not to offer food, for the simple reason that it is impossible.

If, thus, it is desired to make a correct approach, meal-times are to be avoided as bringing too obviously to the fore the abyss separating the holy from the unclean who have never, by means of sacrifice, wiped out the stain of having, as boys, eaten with women. There are, it is true,

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stories of men who have acquired such superlatively high Maki rank—there are none living now—that they have been strong enough, not without raising such storms in the community as almost to wreck it, to break the taboo and re-establish, for themselves alone, spiritual contact with the mother's milk by eating from the same fire as women.[1] Such men who have completed the circle between childhood and divinity are regarded with awe and terror as being almost equal to ghosts.

It is well, therefore, to wait until the meal is over, the pipes lighted,[2] and, with the gathering twilight lit up by moon and stars and by the smouldering fire, to approach with some casual appropriate remark and then sit down and listen, not with the head only, but, as the natives say, the "belly," or what we should call the heart.

Dibates.

Another type of meeting from which women are excluded but which the circumspect stranger may attend is that of the debates, which in fine weather are held in the dancing-ground or in wet weather in the *ghamal*. These are described by Godefroy [3] as being either "small" debates, which are a kind of communal recreation when a little is said about everything, or "grand" debates, announced by the sounding of gongs. Such "grand" debates are held only on important occasions, when, for example, a woman has eloped or some insult has been perpetrated against one of the influential members of the clan, or else to announce the date of some rite, or because certain old men wish to summon an offender before this the only tribunal that exists.

If held in the dancing-ground, each member of the clan takes his place at the correct spot indicated by his rank. The oldest members take up their position on the Upper Side, close to the gongs; if there are five or six of them, they squat on their heels, in the form of a square; three paces behind, towards the middle of the ground, sit those one rank inferior to that of the old men; yet further off, and separated by the same distance from those superior to them, are a group of young men; finally, that of the older boys. All speak in a low voice, though the elders talk rather more loudly than the rest. They discuss the subject of their meeting.

[1] The story of one such will be told in a later volume on Atchin.

[2] A European innovation, hand-maiden of the trader who, by creating this artificial craving which occupies some of the native's surplus energy now that his work in the gardens has been so notably lightened by the introduction of iron, has established a tobacco-currency which, as the natives themselves despairingly say, "goes up in smoke," and must be eternally renewed, for the white man's profit.

[3] Godefroy, 1, 1933, pp. 40-1. The word for these debates in his spelling is *sisilakwarean*, from the verb *sisilakwar*. The Atchin equivalent is the verb *tsil-tsilewere*, whence on that island I had conferred on me the half-joking title of Melteg-tsilewere on account of my long sessions with informants. (Melteg is one of the titles conferred on men of high rank in the Maki, see pp. 289, 432.)

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After a time one old man will get up and close the debate by announcing in a loud voice the conclusion that has been reached. The young men have taken no part whatever in the discussion, the whole debate having taken place between the members of the first two ranks.

Position of women.

It is assumed often, on account of the dichotomy between the sexes already mentioned, that the position of women in these islands is a very inferior one. This is, however, only partially the case. It is of course true that they are not held in such high esteem as in the matrilineal islands further north. Nevertheless their position is infinitely better than among the Big Nambas who inhabit the neighbouring plateau of North Malekula. Though in the Small Islands men occasionally beat their wives and white men tell gruesome tales of ham-stringing by jealous husbands, such actions are rare and are by no means generally approved. If matters get too bad, the wife can leave and go back to her own people. If she persists in not returning and has the backing of her own relatives, these pay back the pigs the husband has given as bride-price, and she is free to marry again. But all the numerous minor pigs ceremonially presented to the wife's relatives are not paid back, so that the husband is the loser, even in pigs, and has therefore, if from this point of view only (which of course is not the only one), every inducement to make his wife's lot a contented one. During pregnancy and for some months after the birth of a child she is, moreover, carefully, almost fiercely, watched over by her own people, who at times take possession of the husband's house in order to ensure her welfare. Nor is the women's lot in the gardens too hard. Though she does indeed do most of the carrying, specially heavy loads are carried by the men, and though in the matter of time she is busy for longer periods, the heavy work of cutting down the trees, burning the scrub, and generally clearing the ground is done by men, while in the planting of the yams both share, and it is not unusual to see a husband with his wife and children all busy on the same yam-mound. At home, she feeds most of the pigs, but the most valuable tuskers are cared for by the men who are to sacrifice them. Women also have certain Lodges of their own which men may not enter, and receive complimentary titles when their menfolk perform the Maki rite.[1] They are said also even to perform a kind of secret Maki of their own.

Interior of houses. Tools and other domestic objects.

On the evening of any ordinary day, when no particular rite is in progress, the men and women, after seeing to the safety of the canoes in which they have returned from their mainland gardens, having each taken their own separate paths up from the shore and then shared the

[1] See p. 394.

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to the fact that they acquired many of the chief Maki rites from the mainland of Malekula before these were acquired on Vao, they hold, despite their small numbers, a very special position on the island. Their history is recorded in Chapter XXII.

(*b*) The two former communities of Lavame, which has only three surviving members, also now living at Togh-vanu, and Handillagh, which is extinct. Lavame formerly possessed two dancing-grounds. The now deserted dancing-ground marked in Map III as being on the path leading from Le-siwar to Togh-vanu is probably one of these. The inhabitants formerly had close kinship ties with the mainland village of Le-huru. A tale dealing with the quarrel between Lavame and Handillagh is given on p. 80.

(*c*) The refugee community of Le-se-kere, of which only one man survives.

None of these, however, affect the essential organisation of the island, and they may therefore be left out of account here, with the passing remark that the confusion in the stories regarding the origin of the various Vao villages cited in the next chapter may well have arisen partly through a number of refugee communities attaching themselves to existing villages and so giving rise to contradictory legends.

I will confine myself in this chapter to a description of the overt social organisation, so far as I recorded it, of the six villages into which the native Vao population is divided.

Dancing-grounds.

Every Vao village possesses one dancing-ground,[1] called *ne-sar*,[2] which is the focal point of the village, the place where the stone-platforms, dolmens and monoliths, and gongs connected with the Maki, are set up, and the scene of the chief Maki rites. Though in the centre of the village and not guarded by any physical barrier, no woman may set foot on the soil of a dancing-ground except during certain dances and rites connected

[1] There are exceptional cases in which one village has two dancing-grounds (see pp. 61, 89).

[2] Sometimes referred to as *le-sar*, using the locative particle *le-* in place of the indefinite article *ne-*. The use of this word for dancing-ground, shared also by the adjacent Malekulan coastal villages, is, so far as I know, unique in the Malekulan area in which, as also on the remaining Small Islands and in Ambrim, the usual term used for it is some form of the word (*h*)*amal*, which in its turn is related to *ghamal* (see footnote p. 60). The root *sar* is, however, used in this sense also in South-East Oba, where in the district of Lologharo the word for dancing-ground is *sare*, in Losigwei *na-sar*, and in Lol-mangwe *sara* (Layard, 9). In South Raga it is *sar* (Tattevin, 1, 1926, p. 377). In Vanua Lava "a man may plant a cycas in his garden as a sign that it is *sare tamate*, i.e. the lodge or resting-place of a *tamate*" (Rivers, 1, vol. I, p. 89). Dr. Capell suggests that the word is probably derived from the Indonesian *saghap*, "to sweep." Compare Mota *sara*, meaning both "court," "open space," and "to sweep"; *sarag*, "to wipe away"; *sarav*, "to rub," etc. By extension, *sara* also means "to gather, bring together," and *sargag* "to assemble" (Codrington, 2).

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with the presentation of tusked boars. Here, men rule supreme, and here the main sacrifices to the ancestors take place. This is the spot from which each village is said to spring, and in all native accounts of the foundation of any village the construction of the dancing-ground is the founder's first act.

Ghamal.

Close to the dancing-ground is the largest building in the village, called *ghamal*.[1] This is the roofed counterpart of the dancing-ground, being the centre for all such business connected with the Maki as needs protection from the weather. This also is sacred to men, no woman being allowed, save on certain specified occasions, to set foot across the fence surrounding it. The word *ghamal* is clearly connected with the Banks Islands *gamal*, and the intimate association of this structure with the dancing-ground is seen in the use of the word itself, since in Atchin the corresponding word *amal* is actually used for the dancing-ground, while the Initiation Lodge, which in Atchin occupies the same position with regard to the dancing-ground as does the *ghamal* on Vao, is called *lol-hamal*, meaning "in the midst of the (*h*)*amal*." Variations of this same word are applied throughout Malekula and Ambrim alternatively for the dancing-ground or for the structure connected with it.[2] It is probably the same word as *Mal*, the title taken by the chief sacrificer in the Maki rites throughout this area. This title is connected with the verb *pal*, "to

[1] Usually combined with the indefinite article as *na-ghamal*.

[2] Instances of the use of this term for MEN'S-HOUSE or LODGE are:
Banks Islands, *gamal* (Codrington, Rivers).
Torres Islands, *gamel* (Rivers, 1, vol. I, p. 185).
Oba, *gamali* (Rivers, 1, vol. II, p. 232).
Santo (St. Philip's and St. James' Bay), *gamali* (ibid.).
" (Nogugu), *na-gamal*, *na-gomali* (Deacon, 3, p. 473).
" (" and Epi), *komal*, *komali*, *komel* (Rivers, 1, vol. II, p. 233).
South Raga (Pornowol), *mal* (Tattevin, 1, 1927, p. 427).
Ambrim (Sulol), *himel* (Rivers, 3), *imel* (Deacon, 3, p. 512).
Malekula (Seniang), *na-amel* (Deacon, 4, glossary).
" (Lambumbu), (*g*)*amal* (ibid.).
" (Lagalag), *hamal* (ibid.).
" (Big Nambas), *ghamal* (ibid.).
" (Port Sandwich), *amil* (Rivers, 1, vol. II, p. 233).
" (Aulua), *n'amal*, *n'amel* (ibid.).
West Epi (Burumba), *gomali* (Deacon, 3, p. 504).

Instances of the use of the term for DANCING-GROUND all come from Malekula and Ambrim, and are:
Malekula (Atchin), *amal* (where *lol-hamal* means "Initiation Lodge") (Layard, 9).
" (Wala), *n'amil* (ibid.).
" (Lambumbu), *na-amel* (Deacon, 4, glossary).
" (Lagalag), *hamil* (="sacred place of clan") (ibid.).
Ambrim (Sulol), *hamel* (where *himel* means Men's-House) (Rivers, 3).

In the Small Islands of Malekula, other than Vao, this meaning has become extended yet further, in that many VILLAGES themselves are called *emil*, with a qualifying adjective, e.g. on Atchin, *Emil Perav* (long), *Emil Marur* (narrow), *Emil Lap* (great).

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Each Maki-man sacrifices alone.

As each of the chief Maki-men in turn approaches the dolmen to sacrifice his tusked boar his way is similarly barred by a group of mother's brothers, and in each case the same performance is gone through. Each thus acquires two new titles and names: the first, of low rank, acquired during the mass sacrifice, and the second, of high rank, acquired now. Of the two names thus taken, it is the second and highest by which he is subsequently known, until such time as the men of his "line" perform a new Maki, when he will assume a yet higher supernumerary title and take to himself a yet more pious or more ambitious name.

Maki-men retire into semi-seclusion.

All the sacrifices being now over, the Maki-men retire to their own dwelling-houses or into the *ghamal* to undergo various periods of semi-seclusion accompanied by restrictions symbolising a spiritual death and re-birth.

Women's Complimentary Titles

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Before detailing the above restrictions, however, there remains to be described one more rite that takes place on this day which I have omitted till now only in order to preserve a clear picture of the sequence of sacrifice. This is the important rite of conferring complimentary titles on the Maki-men's wives, daughters and mothers.[1] These terms are used here not in a classificatory sense, but in a biological one, so that if a man is unmarried and his own mother is dead there will be no women to share his rise in rank. I know, unfortunately, very little about the part played by women in the Maki, and my interest in kinship was at the time of recording not sufficiently aroused to prompt me to investigate this problem in the way that I should if I were in the field again. My record of this rite is therefore fragmentary and, while there is much that is of obvious significance, there is much also that is obscure.

The rite itself, which is performed by each Maki-man separately in the privacy of his own house-enclosure, is a comparatively simple one, and consists, besides giving the title, in covering up the women's heads as a symbol of mourning. Whether this act of mourning is on account of the Maki-man's own ritual death or on account of the real death of the sacrificial boars I am unable to say.

Differences in treatment between (i) daughters and mothers; (ii) wives.

While they have this in common there are, however, marked differences between the treatment of (i) the daughters and mothers, and (ii) the wives. These are:

[1] This is not to be confused with the women's own Maki, in which they themselves sacrifice pigs and take titles in their own right (see p. 452).

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(a) *When titles are given.*

The titles given to the daughters and mothers (I name the daughters first because, for reasons shown below, this is the native practice) are bestowed immediately after the mass sacrifice, while those given to the wives are bestowed on some subsequent occasion, though I unfortunately omitted to record exactly when.

(b) *The titles and their meaning.*

While there is only one title to be given to the daughters, namely *Le-tang*, and one to the mothers, namely *Le-ghter*, the wives receive one title, *Le-lek*, on the first occasion on which their husbands perform Low Maki, and another, *Le-at*, at High Maki and on all subsequent occasions on which their husbands perform the rite. With regard to these titles, it will be remembered that every woman's name begins with the prefix *Le-*, so that the special meaning of each title is to be sought in its second syllable. Thus:

Le-tang, given to the daughter, means "she who weeps" (*tang*), referring to the fact of mourning.

Le-ghter, given to the mother, is a respectful title probably meaning "she who is old." (Atchin *tara*, though I am unable to account in this case for the prefix *gh*.)[1]

Le-lek, given to the wife at her husband's first performance of Low Maki, means "she who stays at home." *Lek* is the ordinary word for "to stay" or "to remain," and refers in this case to the wife's staying at home to look after her husband during his seclusion.[2]

Le-at, given to the wife at High Maki and at all subsequent performances and the most honourable title to which a woman can attain, means also "she who stays at home," *at* being a more serious and ceremonial word for ritual quietness.[3]

(c) *By whom the titles are bestowed and whose names are taken with them.*

While the titles given to the daughters and mothers are bestowed by the Maki-men themselves, and the women in question at the same time adopt the Maki-man's name,[4] those given to the wives are subsequently bestowed not by the Maki-men, but by the Maki-men's own mothers

[1] The Atchin form of the word is *Le-ter*. It is interesting to note that one of the women's titles in Seniang is *Ne-vin Tari* (Deacon, 4, p. 482), which in turn may be connected with the male title *Tari* found in South-West Santo, Oba and North Raga.

[2] Compare the woman's title of *Likan* in Seniang (Deacon, 4, p. 482).

[3] This word may possibly also be connected with *hat*, meaning "bad" in the sense of "powerful" or "feared."

[4] Thus, if the Maki-man's name is Melteg-rori, his daughter will become Le-tang-melteg-rori, "she who weeps for Melteg-rori" (or for his sacrificial boar), and his mother will become Le-ghter-melteg-rori, "the old lady of Melteg-rori."

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(who are now *Le-ghter*), and the names they adopt are not those of the Maki-men but are those of their own brothers.[1]

(d) *Type of mourning-cap with which they are invested.*

While the daughters and mothers are invested only with an inferior or "preparatory" type of mourning head-dress in the form of a strip of umbrella-palm leaf (*ro-mbun*) [2] given by the Maki-men at the moment when they are given their new names, the wives are invested with full mourning in the shape of a widow's cap made of plaited matting dyed red in a variety of patterns and called *mbagh-mbagh*.[3]

(e) *Length of period of mourning.*

While the daughters and mothers are released from their period of mourning on the Thirtieth Day after the Maki, the wives continue to wear their mourning-caps for a period of one or two years, when, after the renewed dancing of *Velal* by all villages in rotation, the removal of these caps is the final act that brings the protracted Maki proceedings to an end.

These facts may be tabulated as follows:

Degree of relationship to Maki-man	*When invested*	*Title*	*Meaning of Title*	*Man's name taken*	*Bestowed by*	*Mourning symbol worn on the head*	*Period during which mourning symbol is worn*
Daughter	After mass sacrifice	*Le-tang*	"weep"	Maki-man (= Father)	Maki-man	Umbrella-palm leaf (*ro-mbun*) regarded as substitute for widow's cap	30 days
Mother	After mass sacrifice	*Le-ghter*	"old"	Maki-man (= Son)	Maki-man	Umbrella-palm leaf (*ro-mbun*) regarded as substitute for widow's cap	30 days
Wife	At some later date	*Le-lok* [4] / *Le-at* [5]	"remain" / "remain" or "holy"	Own Brother	Maki-man's mother (= mother-in-law) [6]	Widow's cap (*mbak-mbak*)	1 or 2 years

TABLE VI

[1] Nowadays they sometimes take the name of their husband the Maki-man, but this almost certainly represents a modern degradation.

[2] Compare the Mota *rogo*, "an old leaf-mat," used also as a verb "to cover with old leaf-mats" and "to have a rough head of hair like an old leaf-mat" (Codrington, 2).

[3] From a root (Atchin *tak*) meaning "to carry on the head," probably related also to the Vao *mbek-mbek* (Atchin *pek-pek*), signifying "a fine" (see pp. 334, 437). Compare the Vao word *bak-baksan*, used as a noun for sacrifices made to the ancestors to expiate an offence against some important custom. Godefroy (1, 1934, p. 54) calls this a "sacrifice of atonement" and instances the case of young men returning home at the end of a period of indentured labour on a white man's plantation, when they have to make amends to the ancestors in this way for having eaten at a white man's fire and swallowed forbidden food—as, for example, the flesh of sows.

[4] At husband's first performance of Low Maki.

[5] At High Maki and all subsequent performances.

[6] On Atchin and Wala the bestower is the wife's own brother.

3: Harrisson N-5 (1934-1935) 1936
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chief's daughter has been given up for years, Atchin contradicts his theory in fact. Baker I think underestimates the vanity of the native.

The Atchinese are among the very few peoples friendly to the administration, and they now appeal at once for peaceful settlements to all disputes. In the old days they gave a lot of trouble, but living on a small island they found a warship was more significant to them than to the bushmen. War is no more, abortion uncommon; the older men consciously want the place to grow; and grow it does. Thus it was the Atchinese who drew my attention to the exorbitantly high pig payments demanded as bride price all over the area in recent years; with their support I was able to lower the price by 80 per cent., back to pre-white level, thus enabling young men to marry with only normal difficulty. Similarly these folk like European medicines for introduced diseases, but use their own for the endemic ones. Their pig transactions and graded-society (*Maki*) rites have been modified; some things have been taken away, others added, both from white and black sources. Atchin dances are second only to those of Matanavat; they are kept up with exactitude and enthusiasm; also with new and often spontaneous variations in one type of the *na-leng*, the highest manifestation of Hebridean art and living. Sorcery and poison are no longer tolerated; the Atchinese are bitter against the adjacent island Vao for continuing these practices—bitter, but not disbelieving. Magic is not now important; old legends and stories, in which these people excel, are a part of daily life and juvenile instruction; the same myths collected by Layard and myself in 1914 and 1935 respectively agree perfectly, there has been no deterioration. The old burial rites and beliefs survive unimpaired.

In general the old customs that are savage or anti-social under modern conditions have disappeared, while those with business, religious, health, or play value have survived, even expanded. It is in this Europeanized heathenism, this intelligently primitive and adaptive but obstinate outlook, that the ancient Melanesian culture is most likely and able to survive. On Atchin to-day every village has its great drums, in lovely dancing glades, dolmens, carved human and bird effigies; a little distance away behind a native-style stone wall is a cluster of palm houses kept clean; at one corner perhaps a cement and iron house, the men's lodge, pride of the place. The women have more status, charm, freedom and gaiety than elsewhere in the area.

I found the Atchinese charming people, and charm is a word I seldom think of applying to a Melanesian. They are thoroughly independent and sophisticated, combining Melanesian business ability with a more Polynesian intelligence and grace to direct it. The planters and missionaries have no good word to say for Atchin, which is an indication. Few tribes have had the good luck and intelligence to use the white man's things for their own advantage, in harmony with their own culture. I believe that what the Hebridean needs most to-day is guidance in this direction associated with simple medical aid. New education, religion and outlet are unnecessary and inadvisable now, and perhaps for some time to come. A few sympathetic men and women, without undue prejudice, could with a little money and many medicines work wonders. Atchin might well serve as a model in cultural adaptation. It